

# Guide and Proceedings of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences 21st International Congress of Nutrition Held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 15–20 October 2017

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## The International Union of Nutritional Sciences: Guide for Communication Priorities and Strategic Nutrition Outcomes at the 21st International Congress of Nutrition

The proposal to form the International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS) was first discussed in July 1946 in London at a meeting that was attended by 22 investigators from 13 countries. Statutes and bylaws were discussed, and the principal objectives of the Union were defined as 1) the exchange of information, 2) the organization of international congresses, and 3) the publication of the results of scientific investigation. Since then, the Union has grown steadily. At first the holding of the congresses was its main task, but, over the course of the years, other equally important activities have been developed, which required long-term planning and efficient administration.

Currently the IUNS involves 81 Adhering Bodies and 18 affiliated organizations. Thus, the IUNS has a special consultative status with the FAO; the WHO; UNICEF; the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO); the International Science Council (ISC); and the International Union of Food Science and Technology (IU-FoST, including establishing joint committees and working groups.

The current mission and objectives of the IUNS are as follows:

- (1) To promote advancement in nutrition science, research, and development through international cooperation at the global level.
- (2) To encourage communication and collaboration among nutrition scientists as well as to disseminate information in nutritional sciences through modern communications technologies.

The IUNS features contemporary global nutrition issues, such as the epidemic challenge of obesity and the nature and determinants of child development, implicating task forces for programmatic interventions with young children. In this context, the IUNS also embraces a comprehensive nutrition agenda to address food and nutrition problems in developing countries and training for nutritionists. The vision of the IUNS focuses on the premise that to live “a life without malnutrition is a fundamental human right.” The persistence of malnutrition, especially among children and mothers, in a world of plenty is unacceptable. Nutrition improvement anywhere in the world is not a charity but a societal, household, and individual right.

The IUNS statutes and rules have recently been revised and approved by the Assembly of Adhering Bodies of IUNS and were finally ratified at IUNS’ 21st International Congress of Nutrition (ICN) in 2017. The IUNS program for the period 2017–2021 considers the following action points:

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- Attention to Adhering Bodies and Affiliated Societies
- Education and online courses
- Capacity building in nutritional areas
- Implementation of new task forces
- Documents concerning conflicts-of-interest interactions
- Regulation of relationships with the private sector
- Unrestricted grants seeking
- Guidelines for council members and meetings planning
- Organization of the 22nd IUNS-ICN Congress in Japan in 2021

The approved IUNS task forces and their responsible scientists for the 2017–2021 period are as follows: Benefit-Risk and Cost-Effectiveness of Micronutrient Interventions (Sant-Rayn Pasricha and Lynnette Neufeld), Precision Nutrition (J Alfredo Martinez and Martin Kohlmeier), Capacity Building (J Alfredo Martinez, Hyun Sook Kim, and Francis Zotor), Traditional and Indigenous Food Systems and Nutrition (Gina Kennedy and V Prakash), Towards Multi-dimensional Indicators of Child Growth and Development (Gina Kennedy and V Prakash), Prevention and Control of Malnutrition (Ann Ashworth Hill and Andrew Prentice), Dietary Fat Quality (Berthold Koletzko and Helmut Heseker), Sustainable Diets (Barbara Burlingame and Benjamin Caballero), and Nutrition and Cancer (Alan Jackson and Catherine Geissler).

Within that context, the 21st ICN was organized under the IUNS' auspices in Buenos Aires (15–20 October 2017) conjointly with the Argentinian Nutrition Society (Sociedad Argentina de Nutrición) and the IUNS Council under the motto “From Sciences to Nutrition Security.” The main goal of the 21st ICN was to offer a high-level scientific meeting focused on addressing the key aspects of nutrition in a multicultural environment, from state-of-the-art reviews to cutting-edge nutritional science information. All this notwithstanding, in parallel it provided an exceptional occasion to link the multidisciplinary spaces of nutritional sciences, chiefly basic and applied research activities relating nutrition and food with health. Also, food safety, food production, and environmental sustainability were approached in the program. Concerning the 21st ICN-IUNS Congress, travel grants, registration fee discounts, and accommodation reductions for selected young investigators and other awardees were made possible by the contribution from international agencies and the private sector. In this context, the IUNS granted 70 scholarships to its Adhering Bodies' affiliates and early career scientists from universities and research institutes from all over the world.

The scientific program of the 21st ICN comprised 6 plenary lectures, 40 keynote lectures, 116 parallel symposia, 31 sponsored symposia, and 24 satellite symposia. The congress focused on every aspect of nutrition issues, going through a wide variety of topics, and included 2062 abstracts from 97 countries and an additional 297 abstracts selected for oral communications, which were published in a supplement of

*Annals of Nutrition & Metabolism* (1) and much appreciated in a foreword comparable to this effort of publishing selected presentations from the IUNS 21st ICN. The distribution of abstracts for the different selected tracks was as follows—Track 1: Advances in Nutrition Research; Track 2: Nutrition through Life Course; Track 3: Public Health Nutrition and Environment; Track 4: Nutrition and Management of Diseases; Track 5: Nutrients and Nutritional Assessment; Track 6: Functional Foods and Bioactive Compounds; Track 7: Food Culture Practices and Nutritional Education; and Track 8: Agriculture, Food Science and Safety.

During the 21st ICN we also had the opportunity to discuss with officers of the ASN the publication of selected Plenary and Keynote Lectures of the 21st ICN in *Advances in Nutrition*. Thus, in the present supplement, the following articles are published:

- (1) “Perspective: Are We Ready to Measure Child Nutritional Status with Lasers?” by Joel Conkle and Reynaldo Martorell (2)
- (2) “Humans against Obesity: Who Will Win?” by Benjamin Caballero (3)
- (3) “Diet, Gut Microbiota, and Obesity: Links with Host Genetics and Epigenetics and Potential Applications” by Amanda Cuevas-Sierra et al. (4)
- (4) “Effects of Sweeteners on the Gut Microbiota: A Review of Experimental Studies and Clinical Trials” by Francisco Javier Ruiz-Ojeda et al. (5)
- (5) “Mechanisms of Action of Probiotics” by Julio Plaza-Díaz et al. (6).

Indeed, this supplement represents a fruitful complement to previous publication endeavors from the IUNS council members (7–9) or associated task forces (10–13).

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